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SUBJECT: MARCH 26 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: MILITARY POWER REPORT, TIBET,
TAIWAN AND WHA, NORTH KOREA

11. Key points at the March 26 MFA press briefing:

-- The recently released China Military Power Report "contains gross distortions of fact" and China has expressed its "resolute opposition" and "made representations" to the United States.

-- The "Dalai Clique premeditated and coordinated" the Lhasa riots of March 14, 2008 while Chinese law enforcement carried out their duties "with restraint and in a civilized manner" and did not use "lethal weapons."

-- Responding to a question on Taiwan's participation in the World Health Assembly, the spokesman said that China and Taiwan "can have practical coordination and make arrangements."

-- The spokesman has "seen reports" that North Korea has begun assembling a missile for a potential test launch.

China Military Power Report

12. The recently released China Military Power Report from the U.S. Defense Department "continues to play up the fallacy of the so-called China military threat theory," said spokesperson Qin Gang at the March 26 regular MFA press conference. The report "contains gross distortions of fact" and China has expressed its "resolute opposition" and "made representations" to the United States. The United States "must stop its Cold War mentality and bias" as well as "stop issuing the so-called report" to avoid "further damaging" the bilateral and military relationships. China is dedicated to "peace and stability," and it is the "sacred duty" of the Chinese military to safeguard the territorial integrity and "maritime interests" of China, said Qin. Asked if China would release its own report on the United States military, Qin said that the "expansion of the U.S. military around the world is well known" so no report is necessary.

Tibet

13. It is "obvious" that the "Dalai Clique" learned its editing skills from the Western media, said Qin, when asked about a video circulating on the Internet purporting to show police brutality in Tibet. The "Dalai Clique premeditated and coordinated" the Lhasa riots of March 14, 2008, said Qin. Chinese law enforcement carried out their duties "with restraint and in a civilized manner" and did not use "lethal weapons." Qin asked reporters whether they had forgotten the "violent crimes, social damage and loss of life" associated with the riots. The "Dalai Clique's purpose in releasing this footage is clear," said Qin. "You talk about this footage but still don't notice the innocent civilians who were beaten to death" or "the five Chinese girls who lost their lives." The "Dalai Clique" is still trying to "deny the facts" and carry out separatist activities, yet these efforts "will get nowhere." Qin instructed an attendant to hand the reporter two DVDs on Tibet and urged the reporter to "put these on the Internet too." Tibet is "open" and

will welcome foreign journalists "depending on local capacity."
Pressed on whether the MFA believes the Internet footage to be false, Qin said that relevant Tibet Autonomous Region authorities had already commented on the issue.

Taiwan and WHA

¶4. Asked about the possibility of admitting Taiwan into the World Health Assembly (WHA), Qin cited President Hu Jintao as saying "a reasonable arrangement could be made" as long as the one China policy is upheld. "The two sides can have practical coordination and make arrangements," said Qin. China encourages the United States to oppose Taiwan independence, uphold the joint communiques and take concrete action to improve cross-Straits relations.

North Korea Launch

¶5. The spokesman has "seen reports" that North Korea has begun assembling a missile for a potential test launch. Asked whether China has been informed by North Korea of its intent to conduct a missile test, Qin noted that North Korea has already "informed relevant international organizations." China hopes that "all relevant parties will exercise restraint and be calm." Relevant parties should take steps "conducive to the Six-Party Talks and peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula." Asked about reports that North Korea may be facing food shortages, Qin said that "it is up to the North Koreans" to say whether they are short of food. As "a good neighbor," China provides food assistance within its ability to North Korea.

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Afghanistan Conferences

¶6. China will "keep an open mind to any proposals conducive to peace and stability" during the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting on Afghanistan in Moscow and the UN meeting on Afghanistan at the Hague. China and Russia are "important players in the region" and China is "ready to play its due role."

Relations with France

¶7. China "attaches great importance" to relations with France, said Qin. However, "difficulties" in the relationship are not caused by China. China hopes that France will recognize China's core interests and concerns and make positive responses to improve relations. China welcomes the visits of former French leaders who "have long been dedicated" to the bilateral relationship. China is "ready to work with people who are supportive of friendship between the two countries."

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